# BayArea All

Surveying the Region's Residents: Attitudes, Public Policy, and Personal Commitment to Action

Metropolitan Transportation Commission **April 27, 2011** 

# Findings From Three Public Opinion Surveys

- Plan Bay Area outreach poll (March/April 2011; 1,069 residents)
- MTC "Baseline Climate Initiatives Survey" (February 2011; 815 residents)
- MTC "Transit-Oriented Development New Movers Survey" (April 2008; 911 residents)



#### **Research Objectives of Surveys**

- General: Obtain objective, statistically valid data on Bay
  Area residents' attitudes on vital issues
- Identify residents' priorities for future regional transportation investments and improvements
- Gather information on attitudes, current transportation behaviors, and opportunities for behavior change to develop a Climate Initiatives Public Outreach Program.
- Understand what attracts Bay Area residents to transitoriented developments

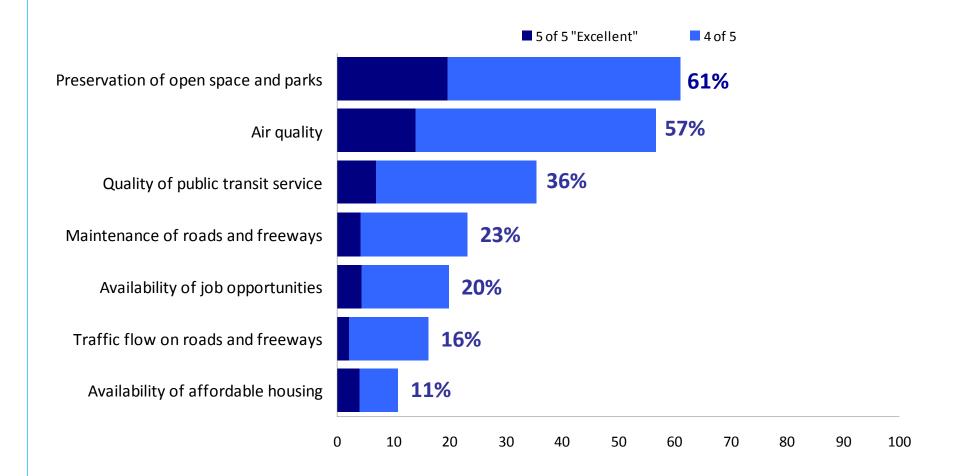


### **Regional Perceptions**



## State of the Region – Perceptions

High marks for environment, low marks for jobs/housing





### **Perceptions by Major Sub-Groups**

**Car/transit use key indicators** 

#### **Quality of Public Transit Service**

Transit users rate this higher

#### **Maintenance of Roads and Freeways**

Households with more cars rate this lower

#### **Availability of job opportunities**

Households with fewer cars rate this lower



# **Attitudes: Environment and Transportation**



## Efficiency, Transit, Walking, Biking

#### Non-auto modes important, even to drivers

Focus on transit spending efficiency before improvements

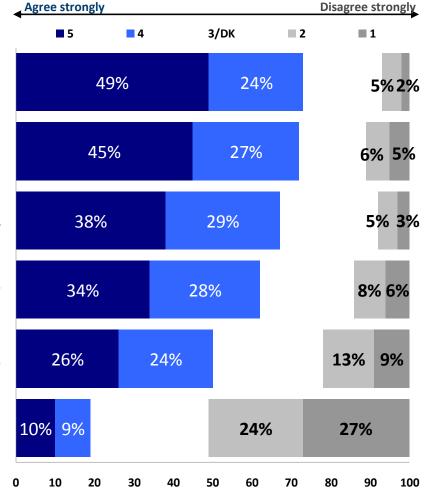
Focus on walking/biking, rather than relying on a car

Consolidate transit agency functions

Focus on transit/freeways running more efficiently

Focus on reducing tailpipe emissions/driving less

Economic growth is more important than environment





### **Support for Commuter, TOD Plans**

Ideas requiring direct contribution least popular

Support strongly Oppose strongly **5** 4 3 2 **1** Transit/cycling commute paid with pre-tax 36% 25% 7% 11% dollars (employer administrated) More regional money for multi-unit housing 22% 31% 7% 9% 14% 11% Reduce max speed to 55 MPH 20% 37% 11% 12% Charge for parking currently free 24% 28% Higher parking fees during peak periods 8% 15% 21% 30% 10 20 100 60

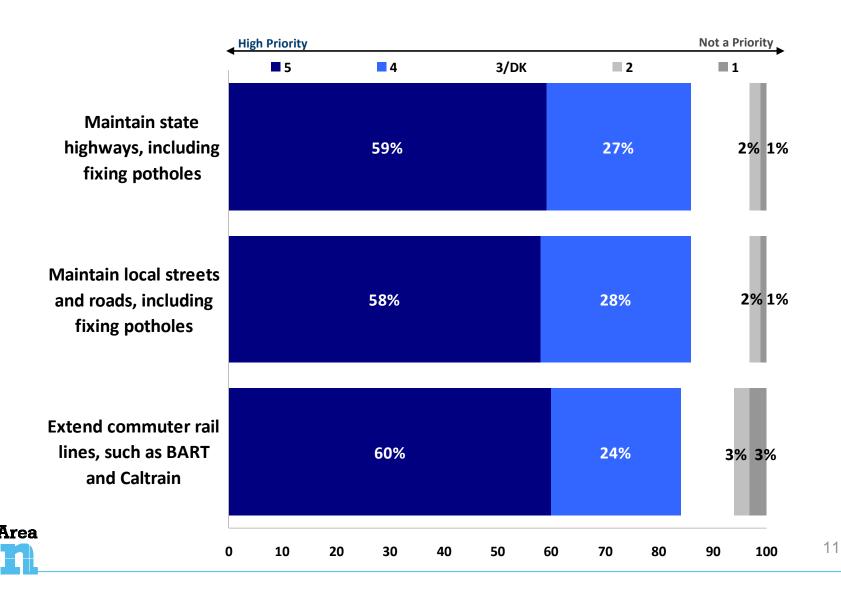


### **Transportation Funding Priorities**



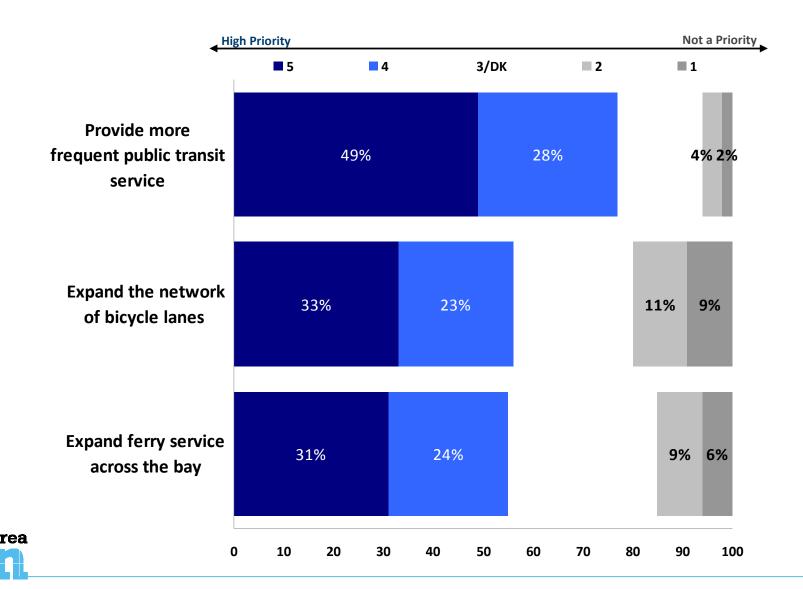
#### **Top Transportation Priorities**

**Maintaining and expanding network is key** 



#### **Mid-Level Transportation Priorities**

More frequent transit highly favored



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#### **Cycling: Benefits for all?**

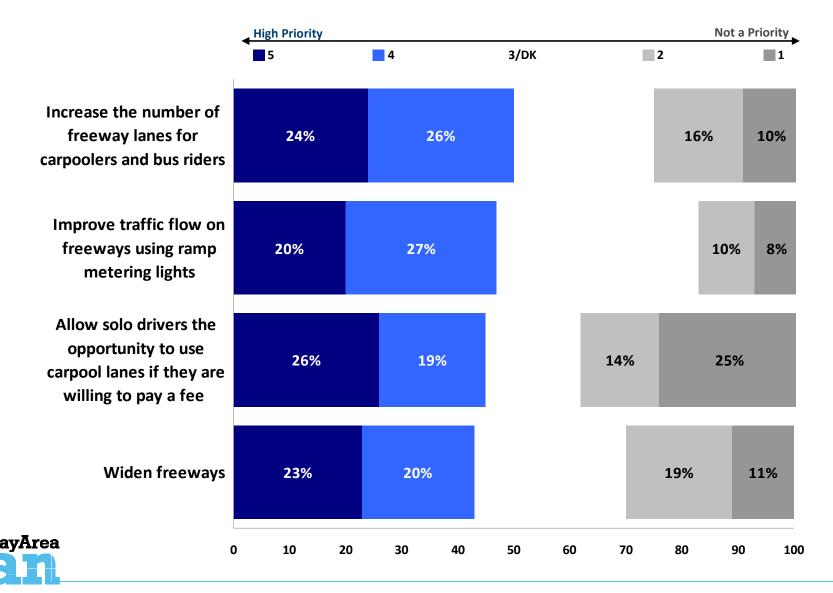
"Expand the network of bicycle lanes" (56% rated 4-5)

- In the same survey, 44% say they never bicycle at all.
- These non-cyclists actually show more support for expanding bicycle lanes (54% rating the statement a "5" or "4") than infrequent cyclists (46%).



## **Low-Level Transportation Priorities**

Solo in carpool lane most divisive; metering lights OK

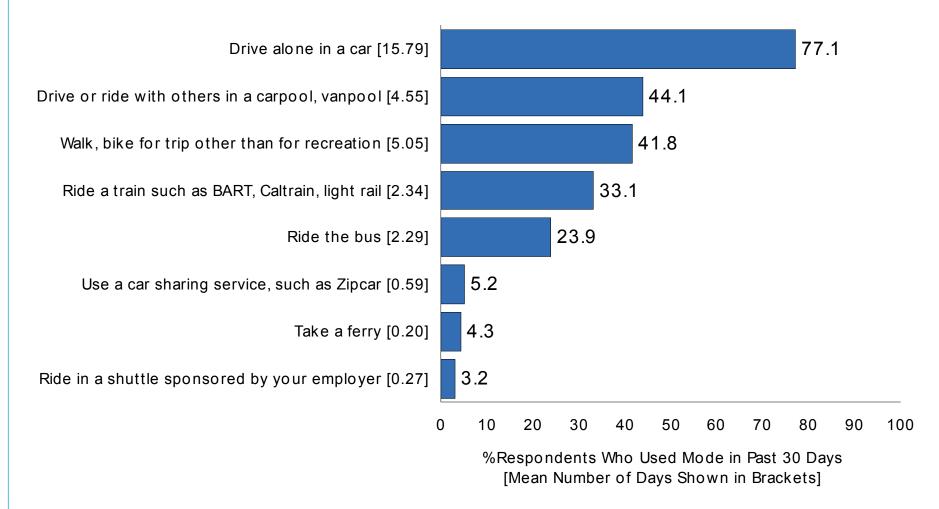


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# Personal Actions & Tradeoffs – Transportation & Housing



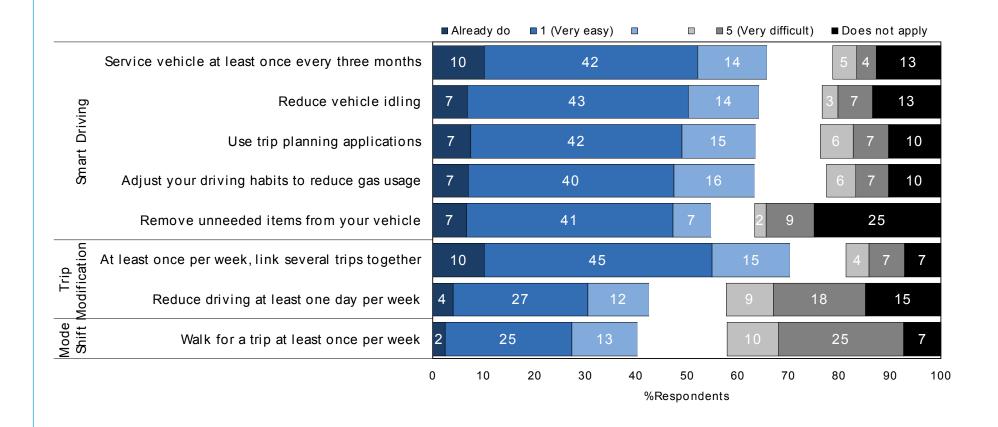
#### **Popularity of travel modes**





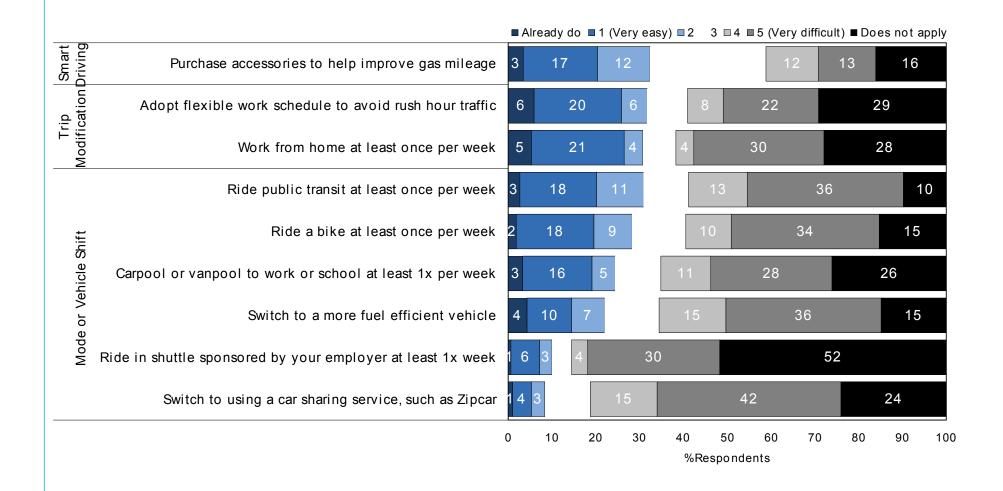
#### **Best Behavior Change Opportunities**

## How Bay Area residents will reduce greenhouse gas emissions





#### **Actions That Are More Difficult**





#### **Top Motivators**

Taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

- Help keep the Bay Area beautiful for future generations
- Be better for the environment
- Protect public health now and in the future
- Be good for your health



# **Top Priorities for Choosing a Home Safety, Proximity**

- Safe to walk at night
- Safe and convenient to walk/bike to errands
- Clean neighborhood
- Short commute to work
- Places to spend time in the neighborhood
- Dedicated parking spot
- Plenty of indoor space
- Parks where my family or pets can safely play
- Nearby places for outdoor recreation
- Living on a quiet street

(from Choosing Where We Live: Attracting Residents to Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods in the San Francisco Bay Area, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2010 www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart\_growth/tod/5-10/Briefing\_Book-Choosing\_Where\_We\_Live.pdf



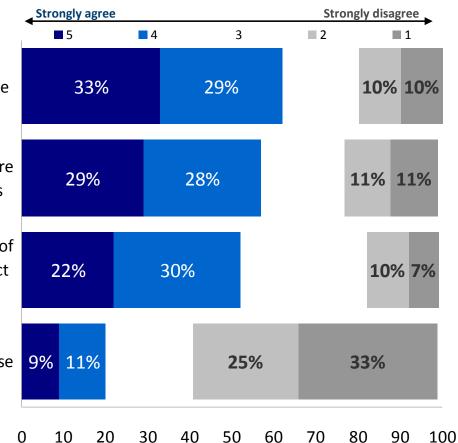
## **Housing Trade-Offs**Long on Transit/Environment, Short on Commute

I would live in a smaller house to have a shorter commute

I would live in a more densely populated area if there were better public transit and better neighborhood amenities

I would be willing to accept an increase in the number of homes and traffic in my community, if it helped protect open space and air quality in the Bay Area

I would accept a longer commute to live in a larger house 9% 11%





#### **Key Findings**

- Strong support for more transit, walking, biking options –
  even though many not ready to give up their car.
- Carrots vs. Sticks: Clear support for policies and programs that positively encourage change, far less for those that do so through increasing costs or rules.
- There are opportunities to change how people travel and live to reduce VMT and emissions
- Bay Area residents can be motivated by altruistic concerns about the environment, public health, and preserving the Bay Area for future generations.



#### **Questions**

